

# IRAQI BUSINESS GATEWAYS



# 2007 ERBIL

BAGHDAD DOHUK  
SULAIMANIYAH  
MOSUL BASRAH



## *Iraqi Business Gateways II*

Briefings by Commercial Service Staff for American Businesses  
in  
Dubai, Kuwait City, Istanbul and Amman  
and  
Business Familiarization Tours to the Iraqi Kurdistan Region

**What:** Under a two phase program, U.S. Commercial Service staff will brief American business associations located in key Middle Eastern cities near Iraq on the rapidly improving legal, mercantile and infrastructure frameworks for trade and investment in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The presentations will include a case study of projects under way or on the drawing boards of U.S., Iraqi and third country firms. Those U.S. firms interested in a more in-depth familiarization of Iraq's current business gateway will be invited by the Commercial Service Iraq and the regional government to visit Erbil and Sulaimaniyah, the Region's main cities.

**When:** The first *Gateways II* event will be held in Istanbul in April 2007, with additional sessions in Kuwait City, Dubai, and Amman shortly thereafter. One or more return visits by interested U.S. company representatives to Erbil and Sulaimaniyah will conclude the program.

**Who:** The initial briefs will be co-organized by the Commercial Service staff in Washington, Baghdad and each of the four cities, on the one hand, and the local American Chamber or American Business Council. The return familiarization visit(s) for the U.S. company representatives to Erbil and Sulaimaniyah in the Iraqi Kurdistan region will be hosted by the Kurdistan Regional Government, with assistance from the Commercial Service Iraq.

**Background:** In spite of well-known challenges and constraints, Iraq in 2007 possesses an economic spark and an incubator for foreign commerce in the northeast region of the country, and in other, smaller areas. Economic growth from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) is gaining momentum and drawing interest from traders and investors from the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. The absence of violence, stability of the unified Regional Government and an open investment regime, along with natural resources, create a viable regional market of five million in an ideal location to reach all 30 million Iraqis. A housing and commercial building boom is underway. Independent power production agreements have been signed by the K.R.G., one with a U.S. builder-operator out of Dubai. Four oil Production Sharing Agreements have been signed, one with U.S. participation.

Importantly, the Region is not only a discreet space for Kurdish family-owned companies and traders from Turkey, Lebanon, Iran, China, and Europe but also a venue where non-Kurdish Iraqi firms are working to build an integrated national economy. This potential was glimpsed in recent trade fairs in the IKR, where a Baghdad-headquartered manufacturer of doors neighbored a booth from Diwaniyah Province. U.S. business in the IKR, while relatively limited, is stirring in housing and packaging, and the area is eager to welcome more American businesses. One exemplary project is a path-breaking \$1.5 billion project, directed from Erbil, that links U.S. technology firms and a Kurdish Engineering-Procurement-Construction firm in building a refinery for the Iraqi Ministry of Oil in the center of the country.

**Agenda:**

- Review the growth trend in IKR and increase the familiarity of Middle East regional managers of U.S. multinationals with the key elements that underpin this promising trend.
- Showcase the pioneers and success stories.
- Identify the challenges to entering the Iraqi market via this promising gateway and identify resources, strategies and partners to overcome them.
- Increase the number of U.S. companies pursuing long-term private opportunities in Iraq, initially in or via the IKR and throughout Iraq.
- Promote and improve in-country venues including Erbil and Sulaimaniyah for international business networking and private sector dialogue.
- Bring U.S. corporate representatives into direct contact with the reality on the ground through efficiently managed commercial tours.

For more information please contact:

\* Mitch Larsen, Deputy Senior Commercial Officer  
[mitch.larsen@mail.doc.gov](mailto:mitch.larsen@mail.doc.gov)  
Cell# +964-07901-665-673; +001-914-822-1698

\* Dr. Dara Saeed, Commercial Specialist  
[Dara.Saeed@mail.doc.gov](mailto:Dara.Saeed@mail.doc.gov)  
Cell # 0750-479-1668